SWAPO

POLITICAL PROGRAM
OF THE
SOUTH WEST AFRICA PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION

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OF THE
SOUTH WEST AFRICA PEOPLE'S ORGANISATION (SWAPO)
OF NAMIBIA

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INTRODUCTION:

The historical development of SWAPO up to present time can be discussed in terms of four important stages and their respective tasks. Firstly, the fundamental question which confronted the Namibian people during the latter half of the 1950's was the establishment of a political organization or a party which was capable of provinding leadership and an organizational framework through which spontaneous and scattered anti-colonial activities which characterised that period could be given an organizational expression. Prior to the formation of SWAPO, there were unco-ordinated, anti-colonial activities which were expressed in the form of localised strikes against colonial rule and individual petitionings to the United Nations concerning the South African racist oppression in Namibia. It was thus realized then that the establishment of a political organization was the most appropriate and effective way by which the politically conscious elements of our society could come into a direct and constant contact with the broad masses of our poeple to give articulate expression to the problems, aspirations and hopes of these masses. Thus SWAPO was formed on 19th April, 1960, as a concrete response to that fundamental need.

The Apartheid regime's initial reaction to the formation of SWAPO was to nip the young movement in the bud by restricting most of its leading activists as well as by forcing many of its leaders into exile. These initial measures of repression helped to underline two facts which were to prove basic to the development of the struggle in subsequent years. These are

(a) The Namibian people were made to realize the limitless nature of the South African brutality when it came to the defence of white supremacy; and

(b) SWAPO was obliged to take stock of the fact that only a political organization with firm roots in the broad masses of our society could weather the storm of repression and bring the liberation struggle to a successful conclusion.

Secondly, the issue of rooting SWAPO fimly in the Namibian society came thus to be the main task during the early half of 1960's. To this end, steps were taken to establish branches in different parts of the country, especially in the industrial areas of Windhoek, Otjiwarongo, Tsumeb, Walvis Bay, Luderitz Bay, and Oranjemund.

Since the system of contract labour has been and continues to be one of the most blatant manifestations of colonial oppression and exploitation in Na-

mibia, it was felt essential to initially root the movement in the workers' section of the population. This close historic identification of our movement with the interests of the toiling masses of the Namibian people is one of the main factors which explain the resilence of our movement when compared to other anti-colonial groups which had emerged in Namibia and have either collapsed or remained paper organizations.
The task of rooting the movement firm in the society entailed also the concentration of the principal issues around which the masses had to be mobilised. This meant that SWAPO had to place the particularized problems, such as those of arbitrary residential recolation and contract labour into the broader context of Namibia's national independence. This was the real beginning of the development of Namibian national consciousness. But since this trend of development represented a direct antithesis to South African colonialism in Namibia, it brought about new waves of repression against SWAPO. For instance, by December 1963 the South African government banned all public meetings in Namibia. A score of SWAPO cadres came under severe harassments in the form of dismissals from jobs, schools, and expulsions from urban areas to the countryside. Concomitant with this stream of harassments, the South African government set up a commission (known as the Odendaal Commission) early in 1964 to draw up a plan for the balkanization of Namibia into a chain of bantustans.

Thirdly, in the face of the above stated measures of repression, designed to thwart the growth of our movement, it became neccessary to establish a guerrilla network of which the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) - SWAPO's military wing - is today the living expression. The consolation of PLAN, in the face of the enemy's concerted effort to wipe out this guerrilla force while it was in its infancy, became crucial during the latter half of the 1960's. The basic problem was the horrendous demand imposed on PLAN to overcome the enemy's strategic plan to cut off our eatern logistic network linking our fighting units inside the country and the supplying rearbase - independent Africa.

While the enemy was tightening his grip on the internal activities of SWAPO, following the initial encounter in 1966 between our combatants and South African troops, the leadership abroad called a Consultative Congress of SWAPO during the months of January and December, 1969/1970 to plan a strategy and programme of action for an intensified armed and political struggle. To achieve this objective the organizational structure of the Party was broadened by creating new departments e.g. Labour, Women, Youth etc., for political mobilisation of the people of Namibia in masses. Other departments like that of Defence were reactivated to meet the demands of intensified armed struggle.

The immediate effect of this programme was manifested in the growing militancy of the Namibian populance as demonstrated by the historic 1971/72 general strike of workers as well as by the militant activities of the SWAPO Youth League.

Fourthly, the first half of the 1970's has seen armed liberation struggle becoming the main form of SWAPO's campaign to bring about genuine and total independence to the people of Namibia.

In summary, it can be said that the roots of the contemporary Namibian national liberation movement can be traced to the formation of political organization during the latter half of the 1950's.

The year 1960 saw the formation of SWAPO. The first half of the 1960's witnessed the dynamic development of the movement, characterized by the consolidation of SWAPO in the Namibian society and the establishment of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia. During the latter half of the 1960's the movement had to strengthen its guerrilla infrastructure in the face of the enemy's harsh counter-revolutionary measures. The early part of the 1970's was marked by the application of the Tanga strategy of intensified political and military struggle.

In the present phase, armed struggle has become the main form of SWAPO's resistance to South Africa's racist, oppressive and exploitative occupation of Namibia.

The defeat of fascist rule in Portugal in April 1974 brought a new dimension to the Namibian liberation struggle. It has made it possible for thousands of our people to move across the Angola/Namibian frontiers to the rear bases of our struggle to obtain both the skill and tools of armed struggle. Hence, thousands of workers, peasants and patriotic intellectuals have been enlisting into PLAN since the early half of 1974.

PRESENT AND FUTURE TASKS

(a) The tasks before SWAPO at present and in the immediate future are:

(b) The liberation and winning of independence for the people of Namibia, by all possible means, and the establishment of a democratic people's Government; and

(c) The realization of genuine and total independence of Namibia in

the spheres of politics, economy, defence, social and cultural affairs.

To these ends, SWAPO has resolved:

(a) To persistently mobilise and organise the broad masses of the Namibian people so that they can actively participate in the national liberation struggle.

(b) To mould and heighten, in the thick of the national liberation struggle, the bond of national and political consciousness amongst the Namibian people.

(c) To combat all manifestations and tendencies of tribalism, regionalism, ethnic orientation and racial discrimination.

(d) To unite all Namibian people, particularly the working class, the peasantry and progressive intellectuals into a vanguard party capable of safe-guarding national independence and of building a classless, non-exploitative society based on the ideals and principles of scientific socialsim.

SWAPO FOREIGN POLICY

(1) SWAPO holds high the banner of international anti-imperialsit solidarity. In pursuance of anti-imperialist solidarity, the movement has resolved:

(a) To work in solidarity with other national liberation movements and other anti-imperialist, progressive and peace-loving forces throughout the world with a view to ridding Namibia, the African continent and mankind of colonialist and imperialist domination;

(b) To support and promote the ideals of unity of Africa as provided for in the Charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU); .

(c) To work in close co-operation with all progressive governments, organizations and popular forces for the total emancipation of the African continent;

(d) To fight against all manoeuvres, from any quarter, that are aimed at a reactionary solution which is contrary to the ralization of a total and genuine liberation of Namibia; and

(e) To forster and strengthen the anti-imperialist unity amongst the national liberation, world socialist, progressive and peace-loving forces in order to eliminate all forms of imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

(2) The Foreign Relations Secretariat of SWAPO is urged upon to streamline our foreign missions in different parts of the world for an intesified diplomatic offensive aimed at exposing the current South Africa colonial manoeuvres designed to impose a puppet confederation of Bantustans on our peaople. This offensive is to be carried out along the following lines:

(a) Strive for comprehensive publicity about the fact that the South African puppets, now gathering at the Turnhalle circus, have no mandate or support from the Namibian population for their collaborationist role;

(b) expose the attempts by certain Western governments to give international publicity to the Turnhalle puppets by extending invitations to these puppets and by giving publicity to the puppets' treacherous views on radio, television and in the press; it must be made clear that this publicity is being orchestrated behind the scenes by the South African government and its big business public relations lobby - the South African Foundation;

(c) strengthen our anti imperialist international solidcarity with the socialist countries, working class movements of the capitalist countries, liberation support organizations, and friendly governments and ordinary people;

(d) heighten the campaign to isolate South Africa from every possible source of support, of acceptance of comfort or of contact with the rest of the world because of its illegal occupation of Namibia and its institutionalized race oppression at home;

(e) this heightening campaign is aimed at the following aspects of international contacts;

(1) financial and commerical;

(2) professional and sporting;

(3) cultural and academic; and

(4) diplomatic and tourist.

(f) make it abundantly clear to the world that SWAPO will never stop the armed and political struggle until Pretoria meets the following pre-conditions:

(1) South Africa must publicy accept the right of the Namibian people to independence and national sovereignty.

(2) South Africa must publicly announce that Namibian territorial integrity is absoltue and not negotiable in any quarter.

(3) All political prisoners must be released including Herman ya Toivo and many other leaders and colleagues on Robben Island and elsewhere.

(4) All political exiles, of whatever political organization, must be allowed freely to return to their country without fear of arrest or victimization.

(5) South Africa must commit herself to the removal of her police and army and stop using Namibia as a base for aggression against neighbouring, independent African countries.

(6) Any constitutional talks on the future of Namibia must take place under United Nations supervision, and should aim at the holding of free elections in Namibia under United Nations supervision and control.

(g) reiterate our stand that SWAPO shall under no circumstances accept the South African plan to impose on our people a weak and fearful confederation of Bantustans, a confederation which will be incapable of contradicting neo-colonial orders from Pretoria.

INTERNAL POLITICAL GUIDELINES

(1) To achieve the aims and objectives of SWAPO and to implement its revolutionary political line, all sections and organs of the organization are charged with the immediate task of disseminating the Constitution and policy documents to the broadest masses of the Namibian people.

(2) All sections and organs of SWAPO are called upon to make supreme efforts towards the building up of a reliable core of leading cadres who are capable of being in close and constant touch with the people at all levels. This task is to be accomplished in the following ways:

(a) strive to heighten the political consciousness of the cadres through regular discussion groups in the local community; the discussions must aim at imparting a fundamental knowledge of the concrete political reality in Namibia and the world revolutionary process; and

(b) the more politically conscious cadres in each section and organ are urged upon to put themselves in direct contact with the comrades who are less acquainted with the complex issues of national and social liberation.

(3) The cadres have the immediate and imperative duty to rally the broadest masses of the Namibian people against the occupation regime. This programmatic directive is to be carried out in the following manner:

(a) each cadres must link himself or herself, in a fundamental way, to the inarticulate, largely illerate, toiling masses of our people, learn from them about their true aspirations, their problems, their doubts and their sense of possibilities;

(b) the cadres must then sum up these information and ideas in terms of their own wider experience and sense of responsibility;

(c) they must then return those ideas and information to the masses in an articulate form and pose new questions with a view to deepening the political understanding of the masses and help them to overcome their inarticulateness, their suspicions for

change and their ignorance of modern organizational possibilities; and

(d) By this method of political work, SWAPO shall involve the whole population in active discussion which is the main pre-condition for the peoples's explicit and conscious commitment to the policy of the movement.

ARMED STRUGGLE

SWAPO holds the conviction that armed resistance to the South African occupation in our country is the only viable and effective means left for us to achieve genuine liberation in Namibia.

However, much as we are convinced that armed struggle must now be the main form of our liberation activity, we do not beautify war as a purpose or regard it as a form of sport. We see war for what it really is — an extension of politics by other means. It is the continuation of political relations in the form of violence.

But as in all other political relations, one must seek to understand the nature of the politics being pursued in examining any war. As social relations, political acts are either just or unjust and just political acts are naturally to be suppported. Hence, a clear distinction between the war of justice and wars of injustice must always be made. We consider our own armed liberation struggle as just and, therefore, deserving support from all the justice and peace-loving peoples. In supporting or committing oneself to the winning of victory by the oppressed peoples or nations, one is helping to bring about conditions under which war will be ended for ever. For, were there is oppression, there will always be armed resistance to bring about justice. It is in this light that we appeal for world support in our war of liberation.

In our struggle to bring justice to oppressed people of Namibia, SWAPO is working towards a universal arming of the people, that is, to transform the armed struggle in Namibia into a truly people's war. The necessary political mobilization to implement this vital aspect of our programme is already in motion.

In pursuance of this strategic objective, the following measures are being undertaken:

(a) All cadres of PLAN are exhorted to uphold the supremacy of the Organization over all its sections;

(b) All commanding cadres of the Peoples's Liberation Army of Namibia are called upon to make concrete effort towards the correct grapping of the revolutionary role of the masses in the struggle as well as to recognize that that role is the primary condition for victory;

(c) These cadres are not only to lead the war but also to assist in propagating SWAPO's political line among the people in all the zones of combat;

(d) New zones of combat must be constantly opened up in application of the strategy of active attacks on the enemy at many places at the same time in order for PLAN to maintain and etend its control of the battlefield; and

(e) Political education in the people's armed forces must, at all time, be deep-going since it is the most vital pre-condition for bringing about a steeled revolutionary discipline among the combatants.

ECONOMIC RECONSTRUCTION

Colonized Namibia's economy is characterised by two prominent features:-

(a) Capitalist component of the economy based on extensive extraction of the country's varied natural resources, fishing and ranching industries; and

(b) A subsistency agriculture enveloping the majority of the African population who are forced to live in Bantustans.

This economic state of affairs has been consciously designed in accordance with the social interest of the white settler group and international monopoly capitalism.

The African masses have been forced to live in impoverished Bantustans.

They are being held in these Bantustans as labour hostages because in order for them to survive, they must of necessity seek imployments as cheap labourers in the white-controlled mining, fishing and ranching industries.

The colonialists argue faciously that Namibia does not have agricultural potential. Their strategy has been to prevent the process of commercial farming in Namibia so that the country can depend on the agricultural products of South Africa. That is to say, Namibia has been consciously reduced to a captive market or dumping ground of South Africa's own agricultural industry.

A nation which is dependent on other country for the food consumption of its population cannot be but a dependent hostages of the particular country which feeds its population.

A close analysis of Namibia's agricultural potential can show that the northern/central areas of Namibia are quite capable of producting more than sufficient food to feed the entire Namibia polulation, provided that a conscious policy is adopted to engage a considerable number of the working masses of the people in this particular field of production.

In a SWAPO-governed Namibia, the state shall take keen interest in providing adequate, modern tools and instruments for large scale agricultural production with a view to making the country agriculturally self-reliant.

The colonial regime in our country has not only been interested in making Namibia a captive market of South Africa's agricultural industry, but also in concentrating the African labour in the extensive extraction of Namibia's mineral resources with a view to taking out as much of our resources as possible in the shortest possible time.

The other negative consequence of this colonial strategy has been the conscious effort to prevent Namibia from developing processing industries. Thus, the huge bulk of the finished products in Namibia comes from South Africa. In this respect, Namibia is again used as a dumping ground for the products of South African factories.

Thus the economic reconstruction in a free, democratic and united Namibia will have, as its motive force, the establishment of a classless society. The social justice and progress for all is the governing idea behind every SWAPO policy decision. The government of a truly liberated Namibia will, therefore, be calledc upon to take the following measures:

(1) Wage the struggle towards the abolition of all forms of exploitation of man by man and the destructive spirit of individualism and aggrandissement of wealth and power by individuals, groups or classes.

(2) Ensure that all the major means of production and exchange of the country are ownership of the people.

(3) Strive for the creation of an intergranted, national economy in which there is a proper balance between agricultural and industrial developments along the following lines:

(a) the establishment of processing industry;

(b) a comprehensive agrarian transformation aimed at giving land to the tiller;

(c) the establishment of peasants' corporatives or collectives;

(d) the establishment of state-owned ranching and crop farms, aimed at making Namibia an agriculturally self-sufficient nation, and

(e) the cultivation of a spirit of self-reliance among our people.

EDUCATION AND CULTURE

A deep going socio-economic transformation of the Namibian society requires fundamental change in production relations which will ensure the speedy development of the Namibia productive forces, particularly the development of the skills, knowledges and cultural creativeness of the toiling masses. Hence, our movement is called upon to embark on:

(1) urgent training of technical and professional cadres at institutions of technical and higher learnings in different parts of the world as well as the newly established United Nations Institute for Namibia.

(2) Provision for work-oriented, comprehensive education and training for illiterate and semi-literate adults (with a literacy component built in) at SWAPO schools.

(3) laying the foundation of a free and universal education for all Namibians from primary, through secondary to university level by training many teachers and educationists now.

(4) developing the people's cultural creativeness as a weapon in the struggle for liberation.

(5) the sufferings and aspirations for the masses must be the central themes of all our artistic expressions, namely, drawings, music, paintings, dancing, literature, etc.

(6) We must strive toward the elimination of all the vesteges of tribal or feudal mentality, particularly the unscientific or supersitious conceptions of the natural and social phenomena.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

(1) At present, the Health and Social Welfare Secretariat of the movement is called upon to strengthen our existing clinics in the rear bases as well as our mobile clinics in the operational zones and to set up new ones.

(2) Our health and social services programme in an indepentent Namibia shall strive for preventive as well as for curative medicine for all the citizens along the following lines:

(a) there shall be comprehensive, free medical services in an independent and democratic Namibia;

(b) there shall be hospitals and clinics in every district of our country;

(c) there shall be nursaries and clinics in every community for the working people and their families;

(d) there shall be health education centres for preventive medicine and family planning;

(e) there shall be training institutions for the training of medical, and para-medical personnel;

(f) there shall be rehabilitation Centres for disabled and infirmed persons, and

(g) there shall be an International Red-Cross society.

SOLIDARITY FREEDOM

JUSTICE